

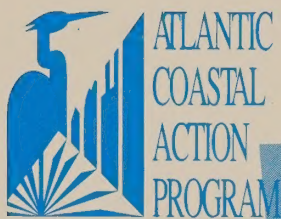
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ACAP

COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

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ACAP: COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

The Atlantic Coastal Action Program was established in response to both a growing demand from the public to be involved in decisions about the environment, and their increasing concern about the environmental quality of Atlantic Canada's waters. At the first ACAP community conservation workshop participants identified three key initiatives that would help ACAP achieve success — and a sustainable future. Those three initiatives are planning, education and local action.

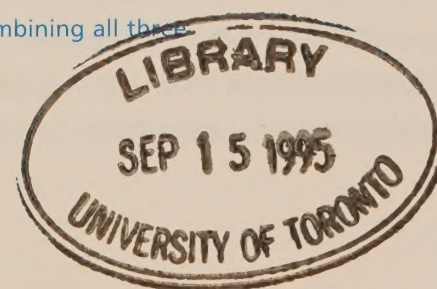
PLANNING - We must plan to effectively manage our environment. Such planning will directly help us restore and maintain our coastal environments by bringing together social, environmental and economic concerns. Equally important, the planning process relies on the full participation of community stakeholders. Finally, it allows stakeholders to identify common objectives and determine how best to achieve them.

EDUCATION - If the public is to play the demanding role asked of it, individuals must achieve a very high level of environmental citizenship. Educational initiatives provide the tools that will enable citizens to fully understand and develop the resources in their communities.

LOCAL ACTION - To maintain public interest and involvement, planning and education must be complemented by local action. Through local action projects communities develop partnerships; demonstrate made-at-home solutions; acquire knowledge; develop skills; and gain confidence. Most importantly, action projects lead directly to improvements in the local environment. Although some problems will require the completion of a comprehensive plan before they can be dealt with effectively, there are many problems that communities can address through local action projects.

Like species in an ecosystem, planning, education and local action are interdependent. Planning and education without local action results in wasted plans and wasted knowledge. Planning and local action without education severely limits the ability of all stakeholders to participate. Finally, education and local action without planning limits stakeholders' ability to identify and achieve their common objectives.

ACAP communities realize that no one initiative alone will secure a sustainable future. The proper mix of planning, education, and local action are essential. Although they are sometimes pursued separately, ACAP communities are becoming increasingly skilled in combining all three initiatives in the projects they undertake.



Data Collection

Bedeque Bay

A FISHY TALE

Years ago the Dunk, Wilmot, and Bradshaw Rivers were famous in Prince Edward Island as prime recreational spots for salmon fishing. Today the salmon are gone — but the trout have arrived to take their place.

Thanks in part to the Bedeque Bay Environmental Management Association, fishing enthusiasts will be able to rely on fine catches of trout from these rivers for many years to come, and — to the delight of all — they are attempting to reintroduce salmon to the rivers.

A survey team is now conducting an assessment of the three rivers. At regular points along the rivers (about every 100 meters) detailed information is gathered on everything from bottom sediments to water conditions, from cover vegetation to erosion-sedimentation problems.

Documenting existing fish habitat conditions enables the Bedeque Bay Environmental Management Association to zero in on critical problem areas of the rivers and propose solutions. Sediment, for example, has already been identified as a problem for most of the important oyster beds in PEI's estuaries.

Now the Association is working on pinpointing the causes — and working on solutions to problems — that have hampered the commercial shellfish industry for years.



St. Croix

CLAMMING UP

The St. Croix River Estuary is part of a **185-kilometer waterway** flowing between Canada and the United States. The international dimension of the waterway poses challenges that are unique to the St. Croix Estuary Project (SCEP) within the Atlantic Coastal Action Program.

Restoring the **clam fishery** throughout the estuary is an objective supported by many organizations, including SCEP. In 1993 SCEP began working with a number of these groups, including the Maine Department of Marine Resources, the Georgia-Pacific Corporation, and the St. Croix International Waterway Commission, in a long-term effort to address one of the most pervasive environmental problems facing the estuary:

bacterial contamination.

SCEP has launched a pilot program in community-based water quality monitoring and participated in **clam stock assessments** at two clam beds on the Maine side of the estuary that historically supported harvesting activity. The pilot **water quality monitoring** program was successful in providing additional information on bacterial loadings at, or near, key shellfish growing areas and in involving over 50 people directly in program planning and implementation. Over 200 **bacterial samples** were taken from the 39 sampling sites.

Data has already been analyzed and a detailed **program report** has been prepared. It's available to anyone who's interested.

Humber Arm

GETTING THE PICTURE

The Humber Arm Environmental Association has now pulled together all the available data on the current state of the environment in their area. **All existing information** about the sources of pollution and industrial problems affecting fish habitat, and plant and animal life, as well as the physical, chemical and biological conditions of the Arm have been gathered. With the help of Seaconsult Ltd., an environmental consulting firm, that

information has been evaluated.

In addition to developing a thorough understanding of what information is available, this Newfoundland ACAP group has **identified important information gaps** — and has

recommended ways that these gaps can be filled.

Becoming acquainted with what **industrial technology** now exists for conducting environmental assessments has also been a vital part of this ACAP group's environmental quality assessment. With information at hand about the most up-to-date technologies available, and how reliable, effective and accessible they are, the Humber Arm Environmental Association anticipates there will now be **greater efficiency and lower costs** when preparing proposals for industry or government.

They will also be ready and able to help **develop environmental initiatives** — and have relevant **information** to share with other ACAP sites.

Annapolis River Basin

CUTTING-EDGE ACTIVITIES

The Clean Annapolis River Project, the ACAP group in Nova Scotia's Annapolis River Basin, is going high tech to learn even more about its coastal areas and how to conserve them.

A geographic information systems (GIS), remote sensing, and computer modelling techniques are all part of this innovative project. Volunteers and other partners are now creating a database of information about the coastal area surrounding the Annapolis Basin, as well as user-friendly computer tools for working with the data.

Data on water quality, land use, land ownership, surface geology and many other features are all part of the database, which will help increase understanding about land and sea activities in the area. It will also help solve such problems as shoreline erosion, which is threatening native and cultural heritage sites (including Fort Anne, Canada's oldest Historic Site), and bacterial contamination that is harming the shellfish industry.

The information and techniques developed in this cutting-edge program will be available for marketing to other groups around the world. But more importantly, this project will provide the tools necessary to help identify and solve environmental problems in the Annapolis Basin now — and for years to come.

Habitat Restoration



St. Croix

GOIN' DOWN THE RIVER

As well as giving **fun-filled talks** to school children, setting up public **education displays**, and running their own **gallery** filled with local "estuary" art, the St. Croix Estuary Project has chugged along with the first boat tours of the estuary. Many local residents and tourists took the time to find out more about what happens in the estuary and why the estuary is so important.

The St. Croix River came alive for onlookers as they watched **bald eagles** circling overhead and **seal families** frolicking in the water. When the tides — sometimes as high as eight meters — recede, they leave behind **massive tidal flats**

teeming with the creatures of the deep. The St. Croix **boat tours** were full of spark and wonder, as guides helped participants to see the estuary as a **living breathing eco-system**, and to learn why it is critical to protect it.

Like all other ACAP groups, St. Croix is collecting **information** for an environmental assessment of the area, and they're looking at the bigger picture as they find out what local residents and users want for the estuary. The older people of St. Croix fondly remember swimming in these waters, and perhaps the day will come when their grandchildren will be **swimming there once again**.

A FOREST IN THE CITY

The residents of Corner Brook, and visitors to this western Newfoundland city, can now enjoy a **leisurely stroll** along the banks of the Corner Brook stream — thanks in part to the Humber Arm Environmental Association.

The long-term habitat destruction, caused by industrial pollution and damming, has lead to a strong community desire to **restore this stream to its natural beauty**. The community's desire to enhance both the Corner Brook stream and the surrounding land became a reality when the first component of the Corner Brook Stream Walking Trail was developed. This project is part of the Urban River concept, and ACAP is assisting the stakeholder, Corner Brook Stream Development Association, in planning and developing a network of **environmentally sound trails**.

An **interpretation centre** for heritage and environmental awareness will also be built to help visitors learn about the diversity of natural life in the area, and information about local forestry, wildlife and fish habitats will explain how **everyone can help** preserve the environment.

This **forest within the city** will also provide the perfect setting for people to learn more about Newfoundland's **natural treasures**.

Madawaska

PARKING SPACE

Hard work has its rewards in the Madawaska area.

To make the waterways accessible to everyone in this part of New Brunswick, and to educate the public about the importance and potential of the waterways, the Société d'aménagement de la rivière Madawaska et du lac Témiscouata is developing a park along the lake and river shores.

One important component of the park is a 60-kilometer cycling trail with exceptional views of the waterways. Connecting the municipalities of Edmundston, New Brunswick and Cabano, Quebec, this unique interprovincial park will be built on Canadian National Railway's unused right of way.

And it will offer its charms to all nature lovers. Bird-watching sites, hiking trails, natural campgrounds and rest areas are all planned to be part of this park.

In addition, interpretive panels will dot the trails to make visitors even more aware of the importance and fragility of the area's hydrographic basin. Also to complement the natural features of the park some historic buildings, commemorating the era of the old Témiscouata railway, will be restored.

Madawaska

STABILIZING BANKS, RECOVERING WOOD, MANAGING FISH HABITATS...

One of Société d'aménagement de la rivière Madawaska et du lac Témiscouata's most ambitious achievements is the restoration of Lake Témiscouata and the Madawaska River to their former lustre.

The committed members of this active ACAP group have been busy cleaning and stabilizing the banks of

these important waterways; recovering wood left by log driving; managing fish habitats in designated tributaries; and identifying potential sources of pollution.

The local community has also turned out to help clean up both the lake and the river by taking part in a community water sampling project.

Regularly sampling the water helps this ACAP group to monitor general water conditions and to make people in the area more aware of the pollution in the river — and also how they can all play a part in preventing further contamination.

Cape Breton

A TOUCH OF CLASS

ACAP Cape Breton is big on partners. Active in its many projects are such diverse and important partners as the University College of Cape Breton, the Nova Scotia Youth Groups and the Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation.

What these three partners share with ACAP Cape Breton is a commitment to using the region's brain power — and that often comes in the form of students who bring their youthful experience and energy to ACAP.

Four eager students have already undertaken a literature review and a survey of local residents to help them produce an interim environmental quality report. The next step, which will put another three students to work, involves using high-tech computer modelling techniques to paint as complete a picture as possible of the environmental state of Industrial Cape Breton.

Once complete that environmental map of the area will be turned over to the community as a resource that anyone can have easy access to.

There's more. Students now working with ACAP Cape Breton are in the process of setting up a community

resource library and will, in all likelihood, be an important part of three citizens'-based water quality programs that ACAP Cape Breton is currently developing — with a little help from their friends.



Cardigan Bay

BROADLY SPEAKING

Cardigan Bay, which includes the watersheds of the Murray, Sturgeon, Montague, Valleyfield, Brudenell, Cardigan and Boughton Rivers, has an active ACAP group — and they have made environmental quality assessment a top priority.

Originally, this ACAP group worked hand-in-hand with the well-established Montague Watershed Enhancement Co-op, which was comprised of recreational fishing and wildlife groups. This partnership still continues today — but the Southeast Environmental Association, the community-based group involved with implementing ACAP in the Cardigan Bay area, has significantly broadened its focus.

A major environmental workshop was held initially to bring together the people of the Cardigan Bay area so they could voice their environmental concerns, offer suggestions and highlight solutions. They represented the fishing, farming and tourism industries, environmental groups and associations, all three levels of government, elected officials, educators, professionals and interested community members. In all, more than 100 area residents turned out.

This group represented a large geographical area and equally wide concerns. Together they generated a host of recommendations that the Southeast Environmental Association is now eagerly working to put in place.

Letang

RARING TO GO

Eastern Charlotte Waterways Incorporated is the ACAP group responsible for the Letang area — and they're raring to go. With a record number of fishermen on side, with representatives from all three levels of government, private enterprise, community groups and concerned individuals, the newest ACAP group has its by-laws and work plan firmly in place. They're ready for action — and that action will focus on conducting an environmental quality assessment of the Letang Estuary.

Bedeque Bay

PRIORITY ONE, PRIORITY TWO

Environmental quality assessment — it's a mouthful. But it's also essential to **identifying and solving our environmental problems.**

The environmental quality assessment conducted in the Bedeque Bay area by the Bedeque Bay Environmental Management Association clearly showed that the area's first priority is the problem of **erosion and sedimentation.**

The second priority is to investigate the effect of agricultural practices on **water quality**, particularly groundwater contamination from the nitrates in fertilizer. **Protecting the habitat** of trout, salmon, oysters, upland game animals and waterfowl was identified as the third priority.

This PEI ACAP group first began their environmental quality assessment by hiring a graduate student in biology, who supervised all the necessary work and produced a **report** that clearly summarized environmental conditions in the area. A thorough library search and interviews with key federal and provincial government officials also helped **bring together existing data** and information.

The resulting overview of environmental quality conditions in the area was the first step in this ACAP group's work. The second step, now under way, is to start **finding the solutions.**

Groups/Forums

Cardigan Bay

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

When the Southeast Environmental Association sets themselves a challenge they go all out to meet that challenge.

In the spring of '93 this ACAP group decided to lay the groundwork for their organization by developing a Vision Statement and a series of broad, long-term goals. Turning out to participate in the "visioning" and goal-setting exercises were not only the current members of the Board, but also members of both the previous and the in-coming Boards. Needless to say they met the challenge.

The overall goals the group has set fall into eight general areas: planned communities and countryside; alternative transportation and energy systems; sustainable agriculture and forestry; health of waterways, fisheries and aquaculture; recreation, tourism and public access; protecting the natural environment; environmental education; and comprehensive waste management.

Guiding the Southeast Environmental Association throughout all of their efforts to achieve their goals, which will be reflected in all

work plans, is the group's Vision Statement, which reads as follows:

The Cardigan Bay Region in 2023 will be a peaceful and tranquil, yet vibrant, community. From the air it will appear to be predominantly green and blue, interspersed with golden grain fields, and possessing a fresh sea smell. The environment is clean and healthy; the economy is flourishing, based primarily on traditional resource-based industries; and communities are attractive places peopled by individuals in control of their own lives and educated to make responsible decisions concerning their environment.



Pictou

TOGETHERNESS

Bringing together groups who do not usually work together, indeed who often hold opposing views, is one of the accomplishments of the Pictou ACAP group.

More than 60 local stakeholders have joined hands to address the complex environmental issues affecting Pictou Harbour, its tributaries and watersheds. Identifying areas of responsibility and sources of financing are all part of the group's plans for **protecting and restoring the Harbour**.

Recognizing that there are many groups and individuals in the area who are not stakeholders but who would like to understand their area's environmental problems and the potential solutions, the Pictou Harbour Environmental Protection Project is planning a series of **public awareness and education meetings** with local residents.

Also, in partnership with other groups, the Pictou ACAP

Saint John

THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE

ACAP Saint John is actively fostering greater environmental understanding through its very popular Alternative Forum series.

This ACAP group wants to hear from stakeholders in the area — and they want people to have a chance to speak. That's one of the reasons they established Alternative Forum.

This friendly public forum offers businesses and others with projects in the works — such as Esso Canada who were at one time proposing a pipe line across Courtnay Bay, and Irving Pulp and Paper, who are planning to build a water treatment plant in the province — to present an outline of their project and receive feedback from ACAP stakeholders and other interested individuals.

It's another important step in the process of building effective partnerships.

group is planning to hold a one-day business workshop, entitled **Due Diligence and Our Responsibility to Our Community**. The focus of this workshop will be on helping participants understand why being environmentally conscious translates into **smart business**.

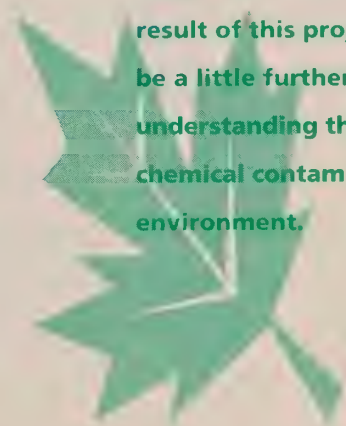
Saint John

EDUCATION, EGG COLLECTION AND EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Helping prevent pollution, developing educational displays, and exploring ways to use liquid waste in the province of New Brunswick instead of trucking it to Ontario for recycling, are all activities ACAP Saint John has eagerly undertaken.

Of course, they haven't undertaken them alone. ACAP Saint John partners include the Saint John Campus of the University of New Brunswick, the New Brunswick Community College, Shore Watch, the Saint John Naturalist Club and TREES International.

Another partner is the Canadian Wildlife Service. ACAP Saint John was active in a tree swallow project that involved counting successful bird hatchings and collecting eggs for toxin analysis. As a result of this project, we will be a little further along in understanding the impact of chemical contaminants on the environment.



Cape Breton

A CLEANER CAPE

Mahone Bay/Lunenburg

BLUENOSERS

With an interim Board of nine committed stakeholders, Bluenose

ACAP is now up and running in the Mahone Bay/Lunenburg area.

Board President Jim Kinley, the Chief Executive Officer of

the historic

Lunenburg

Foundry, joins

a Dalhousie

University

oceanographer,

town

councillors, and

other concerned

south shore

citizens to

begin the

job of

finding

effective, cost-

efficient ways of

cleaning up the

harbours.

To find out exactly what the environmental concerns of their community were, ACAP Cape Breton took their questions right to the **doorsteps of local residents**. And everyone agreed that one issue repeatedly topping their priority list is water, **clean water**.

Untreated sewage, the Sydney Tar Ponds, and garbage were the three most often-cited sources of water pollution.

A number of projects have already been started in the Cape

Breton area to help assess the current state of the

environment. The ACAP Cape Breton group is also

in the midst of seeking funding to **map**

illegal dumpsites and find out

precisely what kind of garbage is being dumped.

The group wants to comb the

countryside to find out the

precise location of the island's

illegal dump sites. Once these

locations are uncovered ACAP

Cape Breton plans to map the

sites, using advanced **computer**

technology, then make this

information available to all the

appropriate government

departments. The final step, of

course, is to work with these

departments to have the illegal

dump sites cleaned up.

ACAP Cape Breton also wants to

map their community for

things other than dumpsites:

Acquiring a **computer**

mapping program of the

area so they can have all available

environmental information in one spot is another

high priority for this group.



Waterscapes

Pictou

DRIP, DRIP, DRIP

How much does clean water cost? Who should pay the price? These are two of the questions the Pictou Harbour Environmental Protection Project is asking and attempting to answer. They've joined forces with Dalhousie University and the Technical University of Nova Scotia in a model Economics Instrument Study project to look at how towns and cities might increase their understanding of water pricing and use.

Many voices are being heard in the development of this project. These voices will also be reflected in the long-range comprehensive environmental management plan being developed by ACAP for Pictou Harbour.

The ACAP group is also assembling information and identifying and ranking the community's environmental objectives. And they will benefit directly from the study by having a team of researchers on hand to help them examine alternative ways of achieving their environmental objectives and implementing an environmental plan.

There are 4500 municipalities in Canada, many with similar water basin systems as the Pictou area. For many of them this research project could lead the way to improved environmental standards at much less cost.



Miramichi

1-800-RIVER

When local residents have an environmental concern about the Miramichi River, they no longer have to wade through lists of community groups and government departments to find the right person to talk to. In 1993 they simply picked up the telephone and called the River Watch Line. Set up by the Miramichi River Environmental Assessment Committee (MREAC), the River

Watch Line is an attempt to provide easy access to information on the environment for local residents. Once a call is received the proper government department or organization is contacted. Callers are then given the information they requested. Stemming from problems encountered historically in sorting out who was responsible for what, MREAC was determined to provide this toll-free service. They wanted to share their expertise with the public. They will wrap up with annual report cards evaluating how effectively various government departments handled River Watch items.

Annapolis River Basin

ON GUARD FOR THEE

A committed group of volunteers is on guard in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley. This hardy band of River Guardians actively **monitor the water quality** at 22 sites scattered along a 75-kilometer stretch of the Annapolis River.

The Guardians **collect water samples** for analysis in scientific laboratories — and in labs they've set up in their kitchens, basements and garden sheds. The data collected by the Guardians — the first group of its kind in eastern Canada — provides a **long-term record** of the health of the Annapolis River. This important information is shared each month with area residents: All they have to do is turn the pages of their **local newspaper**.

This ever-growing group of on guard residents, which includes teachers, homemakers, trades people, business people, and retirees, is raising **public awareness** about enhancing, preserving and using the river in wise and environmentally sound ways.

Thanks to the River Guardians' program, which was funded by the Environmental Partners Fund and established by the Clean Annapolis River Project, the Annapolis Valley now has a highly effective **early warning system** for environmental problems.

Education

St. John's

HARBOURING GOOD NEWS

St. John's Harbour ACAP is putting their most important environmental issue up front where everyone can see it: **On video.**

In an on-going effort to inform Newfoundlanders about the

state of their **coastal environment**, this video,

the first in what is hoped will become a series, will help raise **public**

awareness about the

condition of the St. John's Harbour.

The video will not just discuss

environmental

problems, however. It will also point the way to solutions and St. John's Harbour ACAP is an important part of these solutions. They're letting the public know that they're **eager to hear**

their ideas, research the problems and their impact on the fishery, investigate potential options, and bring together stakeholders and interested groups to carry out an action plan. ACAP Coordinator Donna Gardner expects public education will be enhanced by **media interviews** that will follow the release of the video. The video will also be used in school talks and public meetings, and as a jumping off point for discussions with politicians and other key participants. **Stay tuned.**



St. John's

A PROGRAM FOR ALL AGES

Getting environmental information into the hands of the public is a number one priority for St. John's Harbour ACAP. Concentrating their efforts on school children and university students — who will carry the message back to their parents — this ACAP group's education strategy includes hosting school debates on such topics as "Cleaning Up the Harbour," an art contest (which will be used to illustrate a fundraising calendar), an essay contest on the importance of the environment, and a newsletter for young people.

Miramichi River

IN THE SWIM

In the summer of '93 the Miramichi River Environmental Assessment Committee offered the Miramichi public a very valuable service: Swim Watch.

For the first time that year the public had regular information about the quality of the river water for recreational use. Much credit for this highly successful community initiative goes to the Swim Watch volunteers for collecting the water samples;

to the Department of Health and Community Services for analyzing the water; and to the community newspaper for providing free space to publish the results.

As well, there were weekly reports prepared throughout the summer months that let the public know whether the water quality was acceptable, marginal or unacceptable for swimming at 23 different sites.

The Miramichi River Environmental Assessment Committee is working hard to keep the Miramichi public informed — and involved — in improving the health of the legendary Miramichi River.

For more information on the Atlantic Coastal
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CANADA'S GREEN PLAN



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